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PRIORITY

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FRP:
STAFF

OUTGOING MESSAGE

PAGE 001
TOT: 28 JAN 87

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BRIEF 28 DIRECTOR
TO: PRIORITY LATIN AMERICA BRIEF.

SUBJECT: LATIN AMERICA BRIEF [REDACTED] FOR 28 JANUARY 1987.
FROM: DDI/O/CPAS.

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1. CHILE: PINOCHET APPROVES POLITICAL PARTIES LAW
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]

NR

OUTGOING MESSAGE

1. CHILE: PINOCHET APPROVES POLITICAL PARTIES LAW

CHILEAN PRESIDENT PINOCHET'S APPROVAL THIS MONTH OF A RESTRICTIVE POLITICAL PARTIES LAW IS DESIGNED BOTH TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION OF LIBERALIZATION AND TO UNDERMINE THE MODERATE OPPOSITION. THE LAW--TO BE ENACTED ON 11 MARCH--BANS RADICAL LEFTIST PARTIES AND GRANTS THE GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER PARTY FINANCES AND INTERNAL ORGANIZATION. IT ALLOWS THE PARTIES LIMITED ACCESS TO THE MEDIA AND REPRESENTATION ON ELECTORAL BOARDS. MANY CONSERVATIVE AND MODERATE PARTIES HAVE CRITICIZED THE LAW, BUT THEY ARE DIVIDED OVER WHETHER TO ACCEPT IT TO OBTAIN LEGAL STATUS. [REDACTED]

COMMENT: IF THE MODERATE PARTIES REJECT THE LEGISLATION, PINOCHET WILL DEPICT THEM AS BARRIERS TO POLITICAL NORMALCY. IF THEY ACCEPT IT, HE PROBABLY HOPES THEY WILL BE SPLIT BY COMPLEX REGISTRATION PROCEDURES AND COMPETITION AND WILL BE DISTRACTED FROM THEIR PLANNED CAMPAIGN FOR A FREE ELECTION EARLY THIS YEAR. THE

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OPPOSITION IS SENSITIVE TO GRASSROOTS PRESSURE TO RESUME LEGAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND MAY BEGIN ORGANIZING, WHILE DEVISING WAYS TO CIRCUMVENT THE LAW'S RESTRICTIONS. THE PARTIES HAVE ALREADY DISCUSSED COUNTERING THE REGIME'S EFFORTS TO DIVIDE THEM BY CREATING A TEMPORARY, MASS-BASED, FREE-ELECTIONS PARTY DESIGNED TO SHOW THE MILITARY THAT THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO PINOCHET.

2.

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3.

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